

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

SP-03 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 STR-08

DRC-01 /138 W

----- 088565

R 090845Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8340

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY LOME

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ABIDJAN 3574

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, IV

SUBJECT: LANG AFRIQUE: PROGRESS ON SUGAR REFINERY

RESGC ABIDJAN 2687

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH E/C CHIEF, LANG AFRIQUE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSON STATED THAT MINFIN BEDIE AND SODESUCRE DIRECTOR GENERAL KIGBAFORI WERE CURRENTLY IN US NEGOTIATING WITH LANG ENGINEERING REGARDING SECOND SUGAR COMPLEX IN IVORY COAST. ACCORDING TO ANDERSON, GOIC IS REVISING UPWARD ITS TARGET FOR SUGAR PRODUCTION TO 300,000 METRIC TONS REFINED SUGAR BY END OF 70S. FIRST SUGAR PROJECT AT FERKESSEDOUGOU HAS CAPACITY OF 60,000 METRIC TONS. SECOND WAS TO HAVE CAPACITY OF 40,000 METRIC TONS REFINED SUGAR; THIS FIGURE REVISED TO 60,000 METRIC TONS AND MAY GO AS HIGH AS 100,000 METRIC TONS. ADDITIONAL NEW REFINERIES WOULD BE LOCATED IN OTHER REGIONS OF NORTHERN

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IVORY COAST.

2. ACCORDING TO ANDERSON, GOIC HAS NOT YET CONTRACTED FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY (IES) RELATIVE TO PROPOSED SUGAR PRODUCTION EXPANSION. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT IF POSSIBLE DEPARTMENT RAISE QUESTION WITH KIGBAFORO AND/OR BEDIE WITH VIEW TO INTERESTING THEM IN ENGAGING US CONSULTANT FIRMS TO DO NECESSARY STUDIES.

3. REGARDING PROGRESS OF SUGAR REFINERY AT FERKESSEDOUGOU, ANDERSON STATED THAT BEDIE TOLD HANS LANG, PRESIDENT OF LANG ENGINEERING, THAT LAST DATE FOR CUTTING CANE WAS JUNE 15; THUS REFINERY MUST BE OPERATIONAL BY JUNE 1 IN ORDER TO CUT CANE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF RAINS. ANDERSON STATED THAT CONSTRUCTION WAS IN LAST PHASE; IF ALL GOES WELL, SHOULD BE COMPLETED BETWEEN JUNE 1 AND 15. EXTRA CREWS HAVE BEEN ENGAGED, BONUSES ARE BEING OFFERED, AND NECESSARY EQUIPMENT IS BEING DELIVERED BY CHARTERED AIRPLANES TO MEET BEDIE'S DEADLINE. ACCORDING TO ANDERSON, THERE IS NO MARGIN FOR ERROR IN FINAL CONSTRUCTION TIMETABLE AND MAJOR QUESTION IS WHETHER ALL SYSTEMS WILL TEST OUT SATISFACTORILY.

3. COMMENT: WE ARE NOW IN CRUNCH PHASE OF LANG AFRIQUE OPERATION AND CAN ONLY KEEP FINGERS CROSSED THAT LANG WILL COMPLETE PROJECT AS PLANNED. SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION COULD WELL MEAN THAT LANG WILL OBTAIN SUBSTANTIAL NEW CONTRACTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF IVORY COAST AMBITIOUS SUGAR OPERATING. ALSO, LANG'S SUCCESS IN IVORY COAST WILL CONSIDERABLY ENHANCE PROSPECTS FOR ITS ACQUIRING NEW BUSINESS ELSEWHERE IN WEST AFRICA. LANG APPEARS FULLY AWARE OF ALL THAT IS RIDING ON IVORY COAST PROJECT AND IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO COMPLETE IN TIMELY AND SATISFACTORY MANNER.
SMITH

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